



USAID | PHILIPPINES

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Activities in Mindanao

Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago comprise about one-third of the Philippines' territory and one-quarter of the country's total population of approximately 87 million. It has the highest levels of poverty in the Philippines, partly because of the longstanding conflict between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and separatist groups within the Muslim population, which numbers over four million.

After years of negotiations, one of the two main separatist groups, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), signed a Peace Agreement with the GRP in 1996. USAID responded immediately with livelihood training, infrastructure development, and other economic incentives to facilitate the reintegration of former MNLF combatants.

As economic growth in Mindanao has accelerated in recent years, negotiations between the primary remaining Muslim separatist group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), and the GRP have intensified. USAID is ready to support the consolidation of the peace process by quickly responding to the opportunity provided by such a GRP-MILF agreement.

USAID directs 60% of its total assistance towards Mindanao, focusing on the following areas:

Peace and Security – Helping communities in conflict-affected areas of Mindanao to rebuild a peaceful economy by providing former combatants the production inputs, training, and marketing assistance needed to become small-scale commercial farmers.

Economic Growth – Promoting economic growth that provides business opportunities for as many individuals as possible by supporting producers associations and chambers of commerce. USAID is developing needed basic infrastructure, such as ports and bridges, and assisting rural banks to profitably provide loans and deposit services to microenterprises. Assisting local governments in Mindanao to effectively manage natural resources, improve urban environmental management, and use renewable energy supplied through public-private partnerships.

Governing Justly and Democratically – Partnering with local officials to combat corruption by focusing on transparency and accountability in public administration processes at the local level.

Investing in People: Family Health – Working with Muslim Religious Leaders and local governments to improve the delivery of family health services, including the prevention of water-borne illnesses and infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS and TB.

Investing in People: Education - Increasing access to quality education and livelihood skills in areas most affected by conflict and poverty and improving the quality of instruction—particularly in math, science, and English. USAID also provides vocational training opportunities for out-of-school youth.



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Highlights of Assistance in Mindanao

(As of August 2008)

Between 2001-2008, USAID provided approximately \$312 million to reinforce Philippine Government efforts to secure a lasting peace and build a better life for the people of Mindanao.

PEACE AND SECURITY

- ✓ 834 barangay infrastructure projects (\$50,000 or less) and 40 regional impact projects (\$50,000 to \$1,000,000) constructed or underway in conflict-affected areas, benefiting nearly 4.2 million people
- ✓ More than 28,000 former MNLF combatants earning incomes through corn, rice, or seaweed production, including 8,400 trained to produce and 7436 selling higher value crops such as finfish, vegetables and cardaba bananas.



ECONOMIC GROWTH

- ✓ Over 12,390 households in 413 remote communities equipped with solar-powered, renewable energy systems (in partnership with the private sector)
- ✓ More than 350 rural bank units providing microfinance services profitably, lending to more than 435,000 clients, of which 82% are women
- ✓ Over 100 local governments and community groups using sound environmental practices to manage forests, coastal and fisheries resources, and solid waste



GOVERNING JUSTLY AND DEMOCRATICALLY

- ✓ 1,302 barangays (villages) promoting community peace and developing skills for alternative dispute resolution
- ✓ 16 cities in Mindanao and 103 municipalities in the ARMM assisted to improve local governance through better service delivery and more transparent and participatory planning processes



INVESTING IN PEOPLE

• HEALTH

- ✓ 299 local governments strengthened in providing quality health services for TB diagnosis and treatment, family planning and maternal and child health services
- ✓ 215,000 additional people with access to clean water and sanitation facilities

• EDUCATION

- ✓ 673 schools completed in conflict-affected areas, introduced to computer and internet education, benefiting more than 550,000 students and approximately 16,000 teachers
- ✓ 18,651 out-of-school youths completed courses for elementary and high school accreditation or placement within the formal education system.

